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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PTER](#) [KU](#)  
SUBJECT: BIDOON ACTIVIST MP: BIDOON (STATELESS ARABS) ARE  
SUSCEPTIBLE TO TERRORIST RECRUITMENT

REF: A. KUWAIT 2822  
[1](#)B. KUWAIT 1638  
[1](#)C. KUWAIT 1637

Classified By: CDA Matt Tueller for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C/NF) After the recent announcement of the formation of a Bidoon Affairs Committee in the National Assembly, Poloff met with Committee Rapporteur Khodair Al-Enezi on July 29 to hear his views the Bidoon issue. (Note: The Bidoon -- which means "without" in Arabic -- are Arab residents whose claims to Kuwaiti citizenship are not recognized by the Government. End Note.) Al-Enezi, a recently elected Islamist MP, initiated the move to create the committee. He gave a fairly detailed history of the Bidoon issue, noting that a 1959 Amiri decree had given itinerant Arabs the right to cross into and out of Kuwait at will and to enjoy rights such as employment and education equal to those of Kuwaitis. The late Amir Shaykh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah nullified this decree in 1985, though Al-Enezi could only offer the rather weak explanation that the Amir's advisors asked him to do it and he did so without considering the consequences. It was only after 1990 and the Iraqi invasion, however, that matters got very difficult for the Bidoon. It became nearly impossible for Bidoon to get birth certificates, marriage licenses, passports, and driving licenses. The lack of documentation, in turn, made it equally difficult for them to get employment.

[1](#)2. (C/NF) Al-Enezi's recounting of the history and the resulting problems are typical of Bidoon advocates. His analysis of the implications for Kuwait, however, was more dire than most observers of the issue. He noted the prevalence of crime and drugs amongst the Bidoon as a clear sign that the community is in crisis. The Bidoon, he said, are being pushed underground and becoming radicalized. He observed that because they cannot get all the services they require from the Government, Sunni Bidoon have turned to elements affiliated with the Takfeeri movement and Al-Qaeda while Shi'a Bidoon have turned to elements affiliated with Hizballah, the Da'wa party, and the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI). Al-Enezi asserted that the near-impossibility of Bidoon receiving education since 1990 means that an entire generation will be illiterate, disaffected, and ripe for recruitment by terrorist groups. (Note: In 2005, the GOK began funding private primary and secondary education for Bidoon. Nonetheless, an entire generation dominated by single young men remains disenfranchised, uneducated, and unemployed. End Note.) "The Iranian army is here," he declared dramatically. Al-Enezi also opined that the United States is viewed as the party with the most control over human rights in the region and that it has turned a blind eye to the Bidoon issue.

[1](#)3. (C/NF) Comment: Al-Enezi's comments were clearly

designed to convince PolOff that the Bidoon issue affects U.S. interests directly. Post does not have any hard evidence to corroborate his claims that any of the terrorist-affiliated groups he mentioned are actively recruiting Bidoon or providing them with extensive services. The GOK has an agency, Bayt Al-Zakat, which provides food, clothing, school supplies, etc. to the Bidoon, and in 2003 set up a fund to allow Bidoon children to attend private schools. At the same time, Al-Enezi is correct in pointing out the potential danger if the Bidoon issue is not addressed. Estimates of the population are over 100,000, compared with one million Kuwaiti citizens. If the problem continues to fester, the Bidoon population could pose a security issue for Kuwait and the region. End Comment.

Bio Note

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14. (C) Khodair Al-Enezi is a first-time MP from the New Jahra electoral district, which is probably the most heavily populated by Bidoon. He is a member of the Islamic Constitutional Movement (ICM), the Kuwaiti political branch of the Muslim Brotherhood (see refs B and C for more on the ICM).

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